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TRUMP THREATENS TO IMPOSE RECIPROCAL TAX ON INDIA

Donald Trump said India charges 'a lot', adding that he would retaliate with the same tax that New Delhi imposes on import of US products. "Reciprocal. If they tax us, we tax them the same amount. They tax us, We tax them. They're taxing us, and we haven't been taxing them," Trump told reporters. "Perhaps the most important element of my plan to make America extraordinarily wealthy again is reciprocity. It's a word that's very important in my plan because we generally don't charge tariffs," he said

Modi raps Cong over demand for Shah's axe

Attacks Kharge claim on Ambedkar's insult

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

HOURS after the Congress demanded Union home minister Amit Shah's resignation on Wednesday over alleged 'insult' of Dr B R Ambedkar in his Rajya Sabha address the previous evening, Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly defended him, saying Shah had instead exposed the Congress' dark history of disrespecting the architect of the Constitution, leaving the Opposition "stung and stunned".

In a series of posts on X, Modi said, "If the Congress and its rotten ecosystem think their malicious lies can hide their misdeeds of several years, especially their insult towards Dr Ambedkar, they are gravely mistaken!"

The day began with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge demanding that Modi sack Shah before midnight if the minister does not quit on his own. "If there is no resignation, there will be protests all over the country. Babasaheb belongs to everyone because he used to talk about every person of society, including Dalits, the oppressed and the deprived. He had sympathy for everyone," Kharge said.

Shah had launched a broadside against the Congress in the Rajya Sabha, saying: "It has become a fashion to say Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar'. If they had taken God's name so many times, they would have got a place in heaven."

Hitting back at the Congress, the PM said, "The people of India have seen time and again how one party, led by one dynasty, has indulged in every possible dirty trick to obliterate the legacy of Dr Ambedkar and humiliate the SC/ST communities." Getting Ambedkar defeated in elections not once but twice; Nehru campaigning against him and making his loss a prestige issue; denying him the Bharat Ratna; and not allowing his portrait the pride of place in Parliament's Central Hall are some of the many sins committed by the Congress," he added.

In his pushback, the Union home minister accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of forcing Kharge to go after him. "Kharge should not have supported this nefarious effort of the Congress in spreading false and distorted statements. I am very sad that you (Kharge) have also joined this under the pressure of Rahul Gandhi." P9

1. The Navy's speed boat that lost control and crashed into the passenger ferry Neel Kamal 2. The ferry capsized after the collision 3. Passengers being rescued | PTI

13 KILLED AS NAVY BOAT RAMS FERRY

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

THIRTEEN people, including four women and two children, were killed after a speed boat of the Indian Navy crashed into a passenger ferry near the Gateway of India in Mumbai on Wednesday. Sources said there were over 100 people on the ferry sailing from the Gateway of India to Elephanta Island. As many as 99 were rescued and admitted to hospitals. The condition of four is critical, sources said.

According to a Navy statement, one Naval personnel and two from the Original Equipment Manufacturer on board the Naval craft were also killed. It said its boat was undergoing engine trials when it lost control and collided with the ferry, Neel Kamal. Sources said the Navy's boat first circled around the boat and then crashed into it, causing the ferry to capsize.

A rescued passenger said they were not given life jackets initially. "Only when the boat started sinking did the crew start distributing them," he said.

CM Devendra Fadnavis declared financial aid of ₹5 lakh to the kin of victims from the CM Relief Fund. Sources said an FIR under sections of BNS was registered at the Colaba police station against the Navy speed boat driver and others responsible for the tragedy.

FAKE FIX

Health dept flags 26 meds as misbranded

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE health department has flagged 26 medicines – eight as spurious or fake and 18 as misbranded – which are consumed for acidity, pain relief, cholesterol, iron deficiency, and nasal congestion.

It has stated that these medicines have been produced in violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. Over a year, five pharmaceuticals have been convicted for violating safety standards. Twelve cases are in various stages of trial. Investigations are on to ascertain whether pharma companies used substandard chemicals in 26 medicines flagged by the department.

Of the 26 medicines, 10 used for nasal congestion relief were found to have violated the Act. Four medicines used for reducing eye inflammation and treating dry eyes, two to treat pain, inflammation and conditions such as arthritis and allergies have been labelled as spurious or misbranded. The department found three samples of folic acid (iron supplements) and multivitamin medicines not meeting the set standards alongside other drugs used for treating glaucoma and high eye pressure as well as preventing nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy or surgery. P5

Ashwin's big spin: Bye to int'l cricket

GOMESH S @ Brisbane

INTRIGUE and suspense, the moments leading up to the revelation seemed like an episode right out of the pages of mystery books. It all started as murmurs as if something unexpected was going to happen. It seemed like a premonition. The cameras in the stadium that seem to be omnipresent and miss nothing panned it on an emotional conversation between two luminaries of Indian cricket — R Ashwin and Virat Kohli here at the Gabba. The veil was lifted when Ashwin walked out with the India skipper Rohit Sharma for the after-match press briefing. Someone retiring midway is rare but knowing Ashwin, the announcement wasn't a surprise. He dropped the bombshell, just like taking wickets, out of nowhere. After spending years at the highest echelon of the sport, he would not want to travel if his services are not needed.

Ashwin, having been a part of the India set up for 14 years, had evidently informed Rohit that if he is not needed going forward, it was time to hang his boots. In fact, he had spoken to the captain about it in Perth, where Washington Sundar played ahead of him, but Rohit had convinced Ashwin to stay on for pink ball Test.

After 765 wickets in 277 appearances for India across formats in 14 years, Ashwin decided to call it a day in international cricket. "This will be my last day as an Indian cricketer in all formats at the international level. I do feel there is a bit of a punch left in me as a cricketer but I would like to expose and probably showcase that in club level cricket but this will be the last day," Ashwin said after third Test. P15

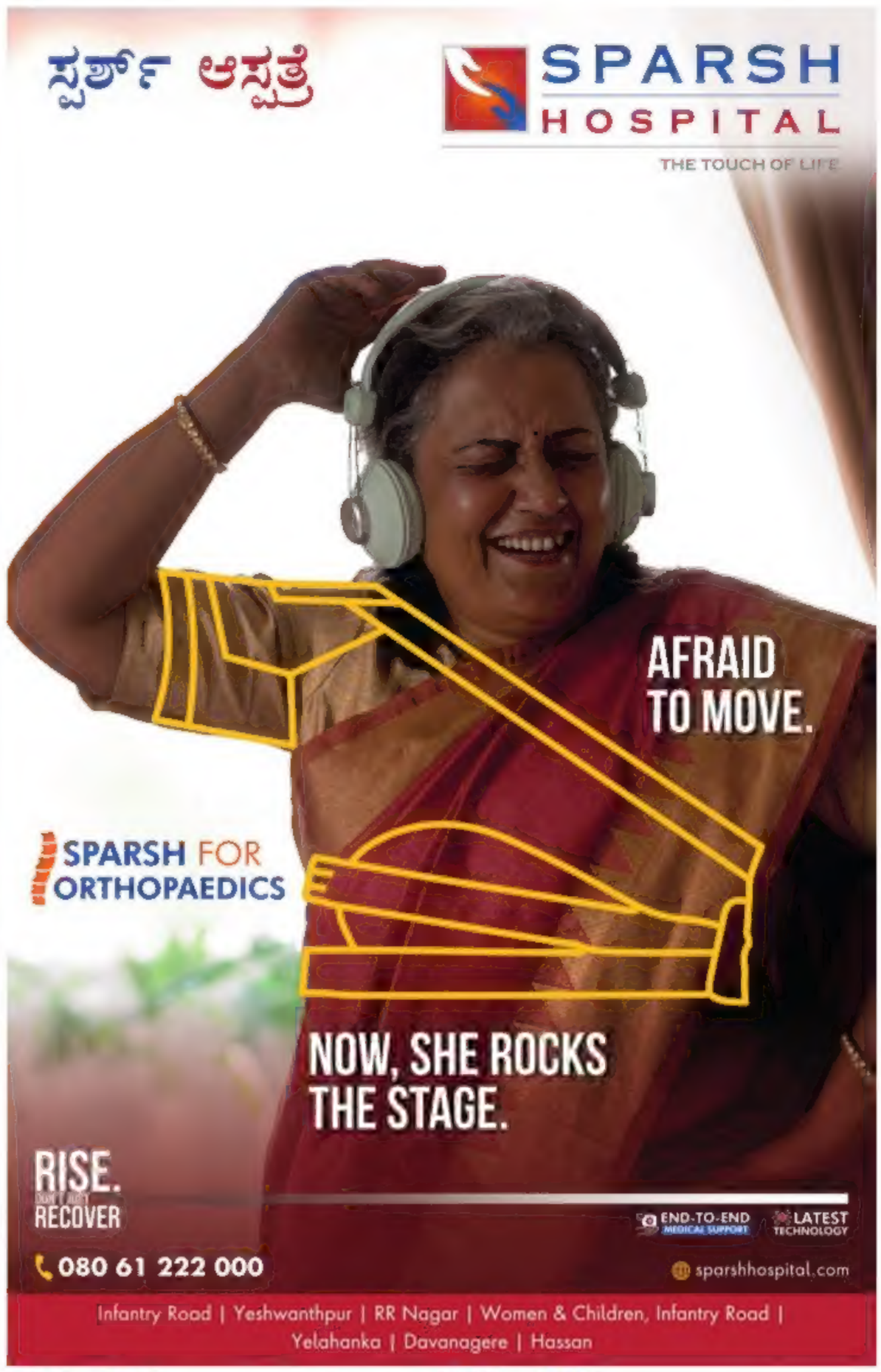
EXPRESS READ

India, China agree to take measures for stable ties

BEIJING: NSA Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Wednesday reached a six-point consensus, including continuing to take steps to maintain peace at borders and promote healthy and stable development of relations |P10

Snehamayi alleges pressure to withdraw MUDA case

MYSURU: RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna on Wednesday filed a complaint with the Lokayukta police here alleging pressure and attempts to bribe him to withdraw a case pertaining to alleged irregularities in allotment of sites by MUDA | P5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